

May 17, 2007



TRANSCRIPT
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MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL

Councilmember Marilyn Praisner, President
Councilmember Phil Andrews
Councilmember Marc Elrich
Councilmember Nancy Floreen
Councilmember Duchy Trachtenberg

Councilmember Michael Knapp, Vice-President
Councilmember Roger Berliner
Councilmember Valerie Ervin
Councilmember George Leventhal



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1 President Praisner,

2 I'm sorry, ladies and gentlemen; I just want to make clear we're waiting for -- one of our
3 copying machines is broken and we're waiting for staff to deliver the packets for one of
4 the items. Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I think we will start and deal with the
5 item that we have in front of us as we wait for Council staff to make the copies for the
6 second item. And if we have to, we'll take a break between one and two, but it will take
7 some time to deal with Item number one, so we might as well begin. I want to welcome
8 everybody to the Thursday, May 17, meeting of the County Council. This is our work
9 session, hopefully, to complete the work of the Council so that staff may begin the
10 deliberations on -- make -- creating the resolutions for our action next week. Mr.
11 Leventhal, you had a question?

12
13 Councilmember Leventhal,
14 (Inaudible).

15
16 President Praisner,

17 Well that's not -- yeah. We're not going to do that until we finish the budget. That's Item
18 3. Item 1 is the Capital Budget wrap-up and CIP reconciliation, and I will turn it over to
19 Glenn Orlin.

20
21 Dr. Orlin,

22 Thank you very much. Every year at this time we attempt to reconcile the CIP to
23 available resources that you've set aside for it. Not just the general obligation bond
24 guidelines and targets that will reach the six years of the CIP and for Park and Planning
25 bonds, but also for impact taxes, recordation taxes and current revenue. And if you take
26 all the steps that are outlined in this packet, you will have in fact reached reconciliation
27 on all of these items including keeping the bond levels where they were set in February,
28 as well as all the other assumptions. Before I get started I would like to take a point of
29 personal privilege to thank the other Capital Budget managers in the agencies who
30 have helped me on this. They do every year. Primarily Jacqueline Carter, who is the
31 head of the Capital Budgeting at OMB; Dick Hawes at the school system; (inaudible)
32 Serrano with DPWT; Mary Ellen Vinski at Park and Planning; John McClain at
33 Montgomery College; and Mary Jane Barry of our staff have just done a wonderful job
34 on this. And I particularly want to thank for the long time service Martha Lamborn who
35 just recently retired and Dick Hawes who will be retiring next month from MCPS. They
36 were the key people to help reconcile CIP's over the last dozen years, as well as many,
37 many other things, and they will be very, very sorely missed. I won't go through all the
38 items because some of the items -- some of the steps that you'll be taking are merely
39 reallocating recordation tax or impact taxes to different projects but it doesn't change the
40 overall funding of the projects. So I'll just hit the main points. First of all, in Park and
41 Planning bonds, we would actually need to accelerate a project which is \$299,000 in
42 P.R. for local parks. This will use up a reserve which exists in FY07, which is right now
43 not claimed. This will require the Park and Planning Commission to submit a
44 supplemental appropriation so they can actually use that money for '07 and unless they



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1 send that over for introduction maybe as early as next week. For current revenue, the
2 main changes here are two. One is the Street Tree Preservation Program, which is a
3 program that got started last year. It's the Neighbor Block Pruning program. If you recall,
4 there was \$2.3 million that was set aside in current revenue on the CIP to pay for a
5 proactive Neighborhood Block Pruning of trees -- of street trees. That program is not
6 funded at all in FY08 and beyond, either in the approved CIP or in the Executive's
7 recommendations. The T&E Committee and Council initially agreed to put in a \$1 million
8 for fiscal year 08 and then let that amount grow over the next few years to a million and
9 half, two million, two and half million and \$3 million. But to reconcile spending and the
10 current revenue to available resources, we need to pare that down or trim it or cut it, or
11 whatever other bad metaphor you want to use, to \$1 million a year. So the program
12 would be \$1 million a year including FY08 and the second change is the Technology
13 Modernization County Government project. Which again, it's a new project, \$85million.
14 The Executive does recommend spending a little over \$5 million in Fiscal Year 08. This
15 reconciliation sustains that. There still will be that appropriation in FY08. However, the
16 projected expenditures in the later years, particularly '09 and '10, would be reduced with
17 a consequent higher amount of investments in fiscal years '11 and '12. So the total for
18 the six years is still \$85 million but a slower implementation over the course of the next
19 couple years after FY08. If you do these things as well as everything else in the CIP, it
20 releases a little over \$14 million from the CIP for use in the Operating Budget. That
21 includes the \$8 million that the Education Committee had recommended as part of the
22 packet you discussed regarding MCPS, but also another \$6 million. For school impact
23 tax and recordation tax, we look at these resources every year. One of the biggest
24 accomplishments you made this year isn't going to be very well recognized by people
25 outside of this room, but there is \$121 million worth of revenue that is built into the last
26 CIP and Executive CIP, which frankly you think is not going to there. And by filling
27 essentially that gap with G.O. Bonds and other sources, you are now putting the school
28 impact tax and recordation tax projected revenues on a realistic path. Nevertheless, we
29 do look at the current most recent experience with revenue for these taxes. What we
30 found was that for school impact tax we are actually coming a little bit higher in FY07
31 than we presumed. We presumed \$8 million. We are on track to get about \$8.3 million.
32 And just by pure coincidence, the same thing is true with the recordation tax. We
33 assumed \$32 million. We're assuming about another \$300,000 in revenue in FY07 from
34 that source. And I'm recommending that you allocate that \$300,000 from the school
35 impact tax to the East Silver Spring Elementary School Addition Project and \$300,000 in
36 recordation tax into the Takoma Park Elementary School Addition Project. And if you
37 that then the school impact tax and recordation tax for education funding sources will be
38 reconciled. For the Transportation Impact Tax, again, you are using more realistic
39 expenditure schedule -- revenue projection for impact taxes that we've assumed up till
40 now, which is \$8 million in FY07, is what you're assuming, and \$10 million per year
41 starting in FY08. As it turns out, we're on track now to get \$10 million in FY07, so we're
42 \$2 million better than what we thought. And I'm recommending that you use that against
43 the Montrose Parkway West project. It's an eligible project, it's in the general district,
44 and it's -- if you use it for any source of projects, it's easier just putting it into one.



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1 There's an error that I made back in the earlier part of the spring in terms of bringing
2 back projects to T&E Committee and the Council to reduce impact tax funding in
3 transportation projects. I reduced it by too much in fiscal years '09 to '12, and by not
4 quite enough in fiscal year '08. And so I'm recommending that you adjust the impact tax
5 and bond totals as shown in that part two of the bond on page 3 and top of page 4. And
6 finally, then Transportation Impact Tax is more of an accounting exercise than anything
7 else. In transportation we have to worry about where the money is collected for the
8 impact tax. It's not one pot as it is for the school impact tax. It's divided up by several
9 different districts. And in the Gaithersburg district there is actually some revenue that's
10 unclaimed. And recommending that that be used against the Watkinsville Road
11 Extended Project, and then \$406,000 be less claimed against the general district, which
12 is typically running in a deficit. If you make those shifts and those changes,
13 Transportation impact taxes will be reconciled. And finally for General Obligation Bonds
14 and PAYGO, basically if you just do the other changes that were referred to in this
15 packet so far, which involves shifts in certain years between general obligation bonds
16 and recordation tax and impact taxes and that sort of thing, and if you recognize several
17 what we call technical adjustments, then G.O. Bonds will be in sync. What technical
18 adjustments are -- we've used these for many, many years -- it's actually realistic
19 schedules of expenditures. What happens of course over time is the schedules change.
20 And all the changes that are noted, and you'll see the flows of monies on circle 19.
21 There's probably a dozen -- well more than a dozen, maybe 20 projects where you see
22 money being deferred effectively from an earlier year to a later year, or maybe a series
23 of later years. That actually reflects the current production schedule of the projects. So
24 these are not amendments to the CIP, this is truth as best we know it. The one example
25 of money that went in the other direction was one that I noted a while back and you may
26 have noticed too, Montrose Parkway West. Montrose Parkway has been under
27 construction now for a while. If you look in the CIP it looks like that most of the work is
28 not going to happen until fiscal years '08 and '09, and be finished well into fiscal year
29 2010. Well the project is well along. In fact, it's going to be open to traffic in a little over a
30 year from now, is my understanding. And by accelerating the expenditures in that
31 project to what the real schedule is now, that actually helps things in reconciling the
32 CIP; believe it or not, it does. A couple of other changes that you should know about:
33 Chapman Avenue extended, a new project. There was in the schedule we got from
34 DPWT I noted that it appears as if the right-of-way acquisition could take place over a
35 somewhat longer period of time than what had been shown, and so that's been
36 reflected. And there are three projects in the Parks program which are actually being
37 delayed because of production reasons; Black Hill Trail Renovation Extension,
38 (inaudible) Recreation Park and Polk Farm Nursery Utilities Upgrade, and those have
39 been reflected. If you take all these steps, it results in a reserves -- this is on the bottom
40 of page 5 -- of \$6.6 million starting in fiscal year '08. Now that's not particularly high. In
41 fact it's pretty low. But it's more or less in sync with what the Executive had
42 recommended for that year; he had recommended \$6.9 million. And the reserves going
43 out in '09 and '10 are on the low side but probably sufficient for what we need. And sure
44 enough, of course, next year you'll doing a whole new CIP so you'll have a different



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1 starting point for '09 and '10. I want to spend a couple more minutes highlighting some
2 of the changes that the Council has made to the CIP during the course of your work
3 sessions of your previous reconciliation. First of all, the entire capital request of the
4 school system will have been approved. You recall that last March -- last January and
5 then March when the Executive sent over his recommendations, he recommended
6 funds equal to the planning funds for East Silver Spring and Takoma Park elementary
7 schools' additions. This reconciliation funds the entire project in both cases. Secondly,
8 the Executive put together a program which required him to make certain cuts to make
9 the numbers balance, including deferring or deleting \$7 million worth of infrastructure
10 maintenance -- sidewalk and curb replacement, resurfacing projects, that sort of thing.
11 This reconciliation restores all of that. We mentioned the Neighborhood Block Tree
12 Pruning Program. Say that five times (inaudible).

13
14 President Praisner,
15 Say that ten times.

16
17 Dr. Orlin,
18 And that program -- there is a program, it will be \$1 million a year; under-funded but at
19 least funded. Chapman Avenue extended and MacArthur Bike Way improvements, both
20 of which were in the program only for design. And in the case of MacArthur Boulevard,
21 not in design until fiscal years '11 and '12. Both of those projects now fully funded on
22 their production schedules. It will be done basically by fiscal years '10 and '11. We have
23 accelerated by a \$1 million the project to improve access to and the facilities at bus
24 stops. So that program will be done somewhat more quickly. You've accelerated by a
25 year the design for the Lock Ridge Drive connection and the Germantown Town Center
26 Urban Park to get those projects closer to being ready to go to construction. And you
27 added some funds for the Glenmont Metro Station garage for public safety
28 improvements and a canopy. And several other things as well. But in a nutshell, again, if
29 you approve all the steps in this packet you will have a fully reconciled CIP. And from a
30 fiscal standpoint again, two major things you've done here, one is you have created a
31 level for bond funding. Not one that rises and falls, but a level of \$275 million and you've
32 sustained that, which has not happened very often in the last few years. And secondly,
33 you've covered \$160 million of funding that you felt like really wasn't going to be there --
34 in the school impact tax, the recordation tax and the transportation back tax. Two really
35 monumental achievements -- well second monumental achievement; the first one is
36 good. Well but it's probably not going to be well recognized outside this room. And with
37 that, I recommend your approval.

38
39 President Praisner,
40 Okay. Is there a motion?

41
42 Councilmember Floreen
43 So move.



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1 President Praisner,
2 Councilmember Floreen. Second by Councilmember Elrich. I know Councilmember
3 Leventhal has a question; George.

4
5 Councilmember Leventhal,
6 Thank you. Dr. Orlin, the field committee has agreed to a suggestion of a study of West
7 Howard Avenue, and I don't see that in the packet.

8
9 Dr. Orlin,
10 These are only changes to what the Council has done so far. So I guess the answer is if
11 you don't see it in this packet, it's in there.

12
13 President Praisner,
14 It's in the budget.

15
16 Dr. Orlin,
17 It's in the budget.

18
19 Councilmember Leventhal,
20 Will it appear in memo number two then?

21
22 Dr. Orlin,
23 No, I believe it's in the -- is this in the Facility Planning HCD Project?

24
25 President Praisner,
26 Yes.

27
28 Dr. Orlin,
29 Yes. When the resolutions are approved next week, there'll be a PDF that -- and you'll
30 see it in there.

31
32 Councilmember Leventhal,
33 And it will be described and the schedule and everything will be in the PDF?

34
35 Dr. Orlin,
36 (Inaudible).

37
38 Councilmember Leventhal,
39 Look forward to seeing that. Thank you.

40
41 President Praisner,
42 Okay, it's been moved and seconded that we approve the reconciliation for the FY07-12
43 CIP for Park and Planning, Bonds, Current Revenue, Impact Taxes, Recordation Tax,
44 and General Obligation Bonds. The motion is before us. Are there any comments



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1 Councilmembers would like to make before we vote, or we can vote first. I see no
2 comments, so all in favor please signify by raising your right hand. It is unanimous. Very
3 good. Thank you. We now need to move to Item number 2, and I don't know whether
4 staff has the packets or comments. Yes, please. And, Mr. Farber, is there something
5 you want to comment on?

6
7 Mr. Farber,

8 This is the final stage of the Operating Budget process. This is the reconciliation list; the
9 items that you had identified earlier for potential funding if funds were going to be
10 available. And this list distills the conclusions the Council has reached in that regard.

11
12 President Praisner,

13 Okay, thank you. I just want to make a correction on the agenda. It says FY07 Capital
14 which it is, but the FY08 Operating Budget. So we're clear not that we're not approving
15 an Operating Budget for this current year. I know folks are anxious and I really don't
16 want to go down the entire list of what's in the budget. So let me just talk generally
17 about some things that I think are important, and then certainly my colleagues may wait
18 may want to comment. First of all, I think this is what we were given by the County
19 Executive is a very good budget. And I know that it was a challenging budget for him to
20 put together, and it's been a challenging budget for us to consider as well. And we know
21 that the challenges are not erased from this process that revenues are not growing at
22 the previous pace, and the State continues to have its problems. And with that in mind,
23 what the Council has tried to do, I think, is one, with new Council get to know and
24 understand the budget that we have in front of us; and two, try to respond to basic
25 service issues such as education, public safety and human services. And also
26 improving services and public transportation, focusing on the environment and as we
27 said in the Capital Budget, existing infrastructure. While accomplishing this we have
28 provided the most significant tax relief to homeowners with the tax credit that we have
29 ever given in that structure. So I think it is a very dramatic improvement from that
30 perspective. Where the Council's additions fall are in the areas of Health and Human
31 Services, Public Works, and in the areas associated with our outside agencies. I want to
32 call particular attention to the College and to Park and Planning Commission. And I
33 know the Commission members are at their job which is where they need to be so staff
34 is here and I hope they will carry the message back that there is significant addition to
35 the park fund and to the administration fund in areas that focus on expanding the park
36 initiatives, including natural surface trails, and facility management, and playground
37 renovation, and the environmental issues, but also in the planning area to ensure that
38 we can continue with the priority -- well begin the priority of zoning ordinance, rewrite,
39 adding so that we can expand and make more progress on our master plans, and use
40 technology in a more advanced way. As I said, I do not want to read everything on the
41 reconciliation list. We have done that in the past and I don't think it's actually very
42 helpful. Folks will see this. The Council has a press conference at 12:30 that will allow
43 us to speak more broadly to the items, and also will be televised. But at this point I
44 would entertain a motion to approve the Operating Budget.



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Unidentified,
(Inaudible).

Unidentified,
(Inaudible).

President Praisner,
Councilmember Trachtenberg, second, Councilmember Elrich. There are lights.
Councilmember Berliner.

Councilmember Berliner,
Thank you, President.

President Praisner,
Mic.

Councilmember Berliner,
Thank you. You would think I'd learn that by now.

President Praisner,
That's okay.

Councilmember Berliner,
This is my first budget, but I don't think one has to be a budget veteran to be able to appreciate how sweet it is to be able to cut taxes and enhance services in the same budget. It is often said that a budget is the clearest manifestation of a community's priorities. If so, this is a budget the people of Montgomery County can be proud of. It is a budget that first and foremost continues our County's abiding commitment to excellence in our schools, both MCPS and Montgomery College. It strengthens the safety net for those most in need increases our investment in affordable housing; supports our teachers, police, firefighters and dedicated county government employees; protects our environment and our neighborhood; enriches our cultural life; enhances our emergency medical service capacity; expands transit opportunities; and provides financial support to the great work of our nonprofit community. All this and we were still able to provide substantial property tax relief. We got to this point through a healthy collaboration between the executive and legislative branches of government, and within the legislative branch nine independently-minded members of this Council were brought into harmony by our Council President, with the able assistance from Vice President Knapp. And of course the magicians on Council central staff who management to make money materialize when we need it the most. I thank them, all of them, for their great work particularly down the stretch. And it would not be the same budget were it not for the contributions made by each and every one of the thousands of people who had a hand in this. Especially the thousands of citizens who care enough to take time out of



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1 their busy lives to share with us why a particular program or budget item is so terribly
2 important to them and to the larger community. The bottom line is that we are very, very
3 blessed. Blessed to live in a community that is committed to investing its prosperity in a
4 manner that will enrich the lives of all who are fortunate to call Montgomery County
5 home. Thank you, Madam President.

6
7 President Praisner,
8 Council Vice President Knapp.

9
10 Vice President Knapp,
11 Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Mr. Berliner. I will be much less eloquent. We
12 do this every year. And it's always interesting to me to see how much emotion and
13 passion gets involved in something that you do on an annual basis. But it's good to see
14 and I think it shows, as Mr. Berliner was just talking about, the importance that our
15 residents and our community feels as it relates to how their resources are spent and
16 how to make sure those resources are spent to make their community better. And so I
17 think we see that manifestation throughout the public hearing process and throughout
18 our debates in the Council. And I thank everyone for their participation. I just wanted to
19 thank some organizations that work very closely with us. As Chair of the Education
20 Committee, I personally want to thank the Board of Montgomery County Public Schools.
21 President Navarro is here with us today, and the Superintendent, Dr. Weast. Thank the
22 Board of Trustees and our new President Johnson of Montgomery College for their
23 actions and their interaction with us. They've worked very closely with all of us in the
24 Council over the course of the last few months to really better understand what's in
25 each of their budgets, and to ensure that what we fund ultimately really goes to the
26 benefit of making sure we have a strong and vibrant workforce and economy. And I
27 thank you all very much for doing that and helping us to achieve what we have this year.
28 I want to commend our new colleagues on the Council because the first budget is
29 always fun and interesting. And I know that it's been an eye-opening experience and a
30 good learning experience, and I appreciate their questions, their forthrightness, their
31 earnestness, and they're really working to understand all the pieces. And as Mrs.
32 Praisner said a number of times, it is a very thoughtful new group that has joined us on
33 the Council and it's actually been -- you know budgets aren't a lot of fun -- but it's
34 actually been very enjoyable; the types of questions that are being asked and the types
35 of issues that new Councilmembers have raised. And I appreciate their participation in
36 the process very much. To thank our Council staff; they've done a fabulous job as usual
37 to really make sure all the pieces come together. There's a lot of moving parts all at the
38 same time, and so I thank Dr. Orlin for his efforts, and Mr. Farber, for bringing everyone
39 together and orchestrating our fifth floor to really help us pull all of the elements together
40 to be successful at the end of the day. I would like to thank President Praisner for her
41 efforts to really orchestrate all of these pieces in I think a very effective way; taking what
42 the County Executive has provided and really listening to our public hearing process.
43 And I think the public hearing process that we had this year we got a lot more
44 engagement than I think we've had in years past. And so I appreciate that. And just how



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1 she -- how you brought the other people along; the meetings with the new confidential
2 aides to really just make sure people understood the process and where we were every
3 step along the way. I appreciate that. I think that was very beneficial and very helpful to
4 a successful outcome. And then -- just -- finally as Mr. Berliner said we are a very
5 blessed community. We are rich in resources. It's very abundant. And it's amazing to
6 me given where I've grown up to see the amount of resources that we have and the
7 commitment that people have to using those resources effectively in our community. But
8 I think that's something we need to continue to focus on. One of the challenges that we
9 continue to face is as our budget grows, we are up to a \$4 billion budget, as property
10 tax assessments continue to increase, people need to know that their dollars that they
11 provide us to spend on their behalf are being spent well and being spent effectively. And
12 I think we continue to make progress as we look at performance measures, and
13 outcome measures to ensure that that's the case, but I think as the numbers get bigger
14 that level of scrutiny continues to increase on the part of the people who give us those
15 dollars in the first place. And I think we need to continue to focus with everyone in this
16 room to make sure that we are always pursuing and poking and prodding to try and find
17 the best uses for our residents' dollars so that at the end of the day, while we have done
18 many, many things well and we've funded many, many worthy projects or many, many
19 projects that are just as worthy that are either unfunded or under-funded. And we need
20 to continue to try and strive to maximize the use of the dollars we have spent so we can
21 try to reach out to as many of those programs that are not funded as well as we'd like
22 them to be. So I'm pleased with the efforts we made in education, with public safety, for
23 our most needy and most vulnerable in our community. There are many, many issues
24 we could comment on but I think the budget will speak for itself. It really reflects, I think,
25 the priorities of our community as we as the elected body have heard them and we tried
26 very hard to listen very closely. And I think it reflects what the people have said. So I
27 thank you, Madam President, for your leadership in getting us to this point, and I look
28 forward now to actually making sure that these resources go to the programs that we
29 need them to, to make our community that much better.

30
31 President Praisner,
32 Councilmember Ervin.

33
34 Councilmember Ervin,
35 Thank you, Madam President. I've been extraordinarily humbled by this budget project.
36 When I was Councilmember Leventhal's chief of staff, I used to wonder why he was so
37 grouchy during the week.

38
39 Councilmember Knapp
40 -- that was just --

41
42 Councilmember Ervin,
43 why he was so grouchy during the weeks the Council deliberated on the budget, and
44 why he always complained about how tired he was. George, now I understand. I



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1 understand because I have experienced the number of hours spent in countless
2 committee session, public hearings, answering hundreds of e-mails, and meeting with
3 many constituents to get us to this point. I especially want to thank my outstanding staff,
4 Sonya Healey, Ben Stutz, Amparo Macias, and Tonya Quinonez for their outstanding
5 work. This work is not just about counting dollars and balancing books. It's about the
6 extraordinary role that government plays in the lives of people who live in our
7 community. I have come to appreciate the gifts, talents and passion that each
8 Councilmember brings to this work each and every day. I want to thank each of you for
9 your generosity of spirit and your patience with me as I find my own voice among this
10 important decision-making body. I am blessed to have been given this opportunity to
11 serve my community in this way. We have an awesome responsibility to approve a
12 budget that is fiscally sound but also morally and ethically sound. We must begin to
13 invest in supports needed for children and families; universal healthcare, universal
14 preschool, parental leave, and other supports. Schools are held accountable for
15 academic performance yet they do not have the resources to address students'
16 nonacademic needs that affect academic performance. Paul F. Cummings in his book
17 "Two Americas Two Educations" funding quality schools for all students staunchly
18 believes that America cannot survive yet alone thrive as a free and just society until and
19 unless it takes the job of educating all its young people seriously and in a manner
20 commensurate with its immense wealth. A student's background should not determine
21 their achievement nor should their zip code. We know that quality preschool is one of
22 the most effective ways to boost student achievement. I want to thank this Council for
23 passing two initiatives that will move this county in the direction of sustained, high-
24 quality, early childhood programs and closing the achievement gap. In Reverend Martin
25 Luther King's Nobel Prize acceptance speech he said, "I have the audacity to believe
26 that people everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and
27 culture for their minds, and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits." In that spirit
28 my goals during the next three years and a half are to focus attentions on the issues of
29 poverty, education, the environment and economic justice. I believe that all of these
30 issues are linked. I look forward to a continued robust conversation about the policy
31 issues that affect the everyday lives of county residents and this body's response to
32 those concerns. Thank you very much.

33
34 President Praisner,
35 Councilmember Elrich.

36
37 Councilmember Elrich,
38 I want to thank everybody for what's been an interesting process. I'd say fun but that
39 probably wouldn't be appropriate. But it's been educational. I've really appreciated my
40 colleagues up here who I think shared a wealth of information and also opened their
41 minds to different perspectives and allowed us to have I think some really interesting
42 and serious discussions about things that not only I think addressed this budget but
43 which opened the door for discussions about how we go forward. Understanding that
44 this isn't -- the budget isn't just about coming to two columns that match at the end, but



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1 actually what you're trying to do when you spend the money, what we set out to
2 accomplish. So I really appreciate the support and help from everybody up here. I also
3 appreciate the work done by staff, which answered all my questions and even if they
4 were things that had been answered 10 or 15 years ago and somebody could reach on
5 the shelf and say here is a report that was done in 1983; it was really nice that instead
6 of saying why don't you go find this stuff, that the staff was there to provide support and
7 to make it possible to get the kind of information I needed. My own staff, Dale, Jessie,
8 Adrian, Tiffany, were really wonderful, and I think all of us realize how important it is to
9 have good staff members because we sit on two committees, but there other
10 committees and our staff members are our eyes and ears on what work is being done in
11 the other committees. And I really appreciate the work that they did. And I reminded my
12 Chief of Staff said this all felt very anticlimactic. And I had made a comment early in the
13 very beginning of the budget process where I felt I was on the Starship Enterprise and
14 everybody was saying the engines are going to blow. And they didn't blow. And I think
15 there is kind of like an enormous amount of angst and stuff that went on for a while, and
16 yet at the end of the day, everything seemed to fall together. It's actually rather amazing
17 in some ways. I think this budget is really important. I think it gives us the space to turn
18 our attention to next year's budget. A lot of us have talked about not wanting to do a
19 budget process in two months, but wanting to do a budget process that involves us and
20 engages us throughout the year. And I think it's important because of the challenges
21 that are predicted for next year's budget. This process made clear to me the need to
22 closely examine what we do and how we do it. And we are going to have serious
23 challenges just to maintain what we are currently doing. And I think most of us agree
24 that there are important areas where we should be doing more, whether it's housing,
25 expansion of healthcare -- both physical and mental healthcare, early childhood
26 development, and a myriad of things that are necessary to close the achievement gap,
27 that I think Valerie spoke very eloquently about. And you can activate critical needs in
28 the area of transportation. Since the likelihood of new financial aid coming from the
29 state or the feds is somewhere between slim and none, I think it behooves us to think
30 carefully about using every dollar we spend, how we spend it, and making sure we
31 spend it in the most effective way. I've enjoyed seeing my name associated on the rare
32 occasion with the word conservative. Something that very rarely happens unless it's like
33 Mr. Elrich is the opposite of conservative. But I think that, you know, I wanted to explain
34 part of my approach on this, and that's that I don't think there's an unlimited amount of
35 revenue. And I think there are enormous needs facing this community. And I think that
36 when -- that the most important thing we do is meet those needs. And if you can't rely
37 on additional revenues to come in and always allow you to expand what you -- what you
38 can do, you've got to look at the revenues you have and ask yourself am I spending
39 every dollar in the most effective way that I can spend every dollar. And so I would not
40 want any of my friends to think that because I was conservative in how I approached the
41 budget, that my outlooks and what I want to accomplish is conservative. I want to make
42 sure that we have the resources so we can address on expanding pre-childcare. I
43 actually believe and I think the research shows that you need to be in the area of one to
44 three year olds if not early to have real effects on outcomes. That's not a cheap



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1 prospect. I happen to believe that that closing class size and reducing class size beyond
2 second grade is important. And I think having options for students who aren't going to
3 college, doing a better job with the kids who are college bound and high school is
4 important. All of that's going to cost money. And if you don't think the money is going to
5 come from new sources, then I think it's important that we look at existing sources. And
6 so my conservatism is born out of a desire to make sure we do the things we do and
7 figure out all the places where the money can be in order to accomplish those goals. So
8 I do think we have serious challenges in the year ahead -- in the years ahead. But I will
9 say this budget I think accomplishes some things that are really important. We do make
10 strides in addressing the needs for staffing and public safety. And I think we've heard
11 about both from the lack of police officers and the disturbing response times in fire and
12 rescue that they need to be addressed and this budget takes a step in that direction. We
13 make a significant improvement then investing in affordable housing. And it's an
14 improvement, but I think all of us know it's not enough. You can take the \$30 million and
15 figure out how much property you are going to buy with that and it's still not going to be
16 enough to stem the loss of affordable housing this community is facing. We gave Park
17 and Planning staff the resources it needs to accomplish the community's expectations
18 for better planning. And we gave them more resources to manage our park assets; both
19 the natural assets and the physical assets that we have in the parks. Something I think
20 has been neglected for a while. And this budget expands recreation program that
21 provides better opportunities for our children. We also allowed the school system to
22 proceed with new initiatives and maintain current ones. And I think this Council broadly
23 has maintained a commitment to the welfare of our children that crosses a number of
24 different department lines. You cannot find all the money that we spend on children in
25 the school budget. You have to look at probably every budget to get a real picture of
26 what this Council's real commitment is to children. This budget also provides a measure
27 of tax relief. And we've focused a lot on how much we are giving back to homeowners,
28 but we've not talked about the other important aspect of Ike's decision due to the \$613
29 rebate per homeowner. I want to especially thank Chuck Sherer and Steve Farber who
30 worked with me to develop a couple of memos and some analysis to be shared with the
31 Executive early on. The decision to rebate \$613 actually produced \$11 million in
32 additional revenues; revenues that didn't come from the residential side of the tax
33 equation but came from the commercial side of the tax equation. This in my mind
34 addresses two things: one is the fundamental issue of tax fairness and who should pay
35 taxes and where the burden might more fairly lie. But the other thing it did is it provided
36 the Council and Executive \$11 million, and I would hate to think where we would be in
37 this budget had we not had those \$11 million. We would be in a very different position I
38 think today, and I think we would have made cuts that we did not want to make had we
39 not had that additional revenue. So I think the decision by the County Executive in that
40 regard was really important. All that said, again, thank everybody for being here, and for
41 sharing your ideas, and for, I think, working in a wonderfully collegial way. I think we all
42 have and we all know we have differences of opinions about some things, but I think the
43 remarkable thing about this process is that whatever our differences were, they were
44 submerged by a common commitment to coming up with a budget that serves all the



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1 Montgomery County residents in the best way we possible can. And I appreciate the
2 collegiality and the hard work that everybody up here and everybody out in the
3 community put into this. Thank all of you.

4
5 President Praisner,
6 Councilmember Floreen.

7
8 Councilmember Floreen,

9 Thank you, Madam President. Well, I would say it does indeed take a budget to bring a
10 Council together. And my hat is off to the Council President. I think, Marilyn, you've
11 done a wonderful job in bringing us to what I think is going to be a nine-vote budget,
12 which is not always easy. I am very appreciative of your efforts in that regards. I also
13 want to thank my Chief of Staff, Merle Steiner, who was a tremendous source of
14 creative problem-solving through all of this, and has been very helpful to me, and I think
15 to the Council-at-large. It's nothing like having someone who has been around for a
16 couple of budgets to help us sort out priorities and find financial solutions; and that goes
17 of course for all our council staff which is -- who are truly extraordinary, Mr. Farber. We
18 have such thoughtful, creative, incisive and careful staff, and we -- I am very grateful to
19 all the Council staff who participated in this effort. I'm also really grateful to all my
20 colleagues. I think this budget shows people not afraid to get into the muck, into the
21 hard stuff, ask hard questions, and apply incredible scrutiny to all the details. It's not
22 easy and it's not -- there's not always a predictable path that that scrutiny is going to
23 take, but I think done a tremendous job. It's really something -- this budget adds up to
24 about \$4.1 billion as I'm told; 99.64% of what the school system has requested is being
25 funded; 99.1% of what the College has requested is being funded. That says a lot about
26 our priorities. Our priorities will continue to be education as well as a host of other
27 efforts. But I think that we've been able to achieve that is a tremendous thing. It's a lot of
28 money \$4 billion. But when you break it down by our population, that's about \$4,000 a
29 person to build roads, educate our children, maintain safety and security, provide
30 recreation, care for our elderly, assist those in need, protect our open space, protect our
31 green infrastructure, and plan for our future. When you look at that way, I think this
32 budget is a tremendous success. And I particularly feel good about the transportation
33 budget. Glenn highlighted a few points. I think it's terrific that the Glenmont Garage will
34 be under construction this fall. And we've added safety and community-related
35 improvements that will go a long way towards making that a real success. Little details
36 matter to people. And we funded additional count-down signals at 50 new intersections.
37 We've added significant dollars for maintenance of neighborhood roads. As Glenn said,
38 we improved access to bus stops. We are working -- we're going to move forward on
39 some road improvements; Lock (inaudible) Drive in Germantown, Chapman Avenue to
40 provide circulation off of Rockville Pike; and for the bicyclists we have accelerated
41 improvements to MacArthur Boulevard. We've added money to maintain infrastructure --
42 It's boring but it's important in the long run. Sidewalks resurfacing, all that stuff that you
43 don't notice until it isn't done. We are committed to advancing that as well as taking care
44 of our trees. I think it's fabulous that we've been able to preserve the County



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1 Executive's commitment to the Housing Initiative Fund with his additional \$3 million over
2 and above the required commitment. And we also are ensuring that all new cars to the
3 county fleet will be hybrids or will use natural gas or other clean and energy-efficient
4 fuels. That's bringing us really into a global warming protection environment where we
5 are going to do all we can to preserve our community and to move us forward. The
6 dollars for Park and Planning will help them to get well on their way towards addressing
7 our planning needs at the same time. So I compliment my colleagues. I compliment the
8 Council President, and I compliment all the people who have been engaged in this
9 process with us. I think we found a fair balance that addresses a huge range of priorities
10 and I think where we've done a good job. Thanks.

11
12 President Praisner,
13 Councilmember Trachtenberg.

14
15 Councilmember Trachtenberg,
16 I promised the Vice President that I will take less than three minutes, and I will try to
17 keep my word on that.

18
19 Council President Praisner,
20 You have three and a half.

21
22 Councilmember Trachtenberg,
23 I've learned that less is more and I know some people might attribute that to my clinical
24 training. But I actually think it has more to do with the fact that I'm a pragmatist and I'd
25 like to start by thanking our President, President Praisner, and our Vice President, and
26 I'd also like to thank all of my colleagues for such an exciting first semester culminating
27 with the passage of my first budget -- our first budget. I think we're a pretty good team.
28 And as a long-time advocate for women's rights, I'm particularly proud that we have a
29 woman president. And, President Praisner, you know, your wisdom, your knowledge,
30 your patience were so critical to this process, and I do thank you for that. And I know I
31 speak for my colleagues when I saw that. I also want to thank my entire staff of seven,
32 who have supported our collective vision, the quality and opportunity, and they have
33 done that in such an extraordinary fashion, and I thank them so much. I'm very pleased
34 for that funds are in the budget for a lot of things that I've worked on over the years in
35 the community, and I know have such a priority status for our community. I'm just going
36 to speak briefly to a few of them. I am delighted that we have been able to fund the
37 Mobile Crisis Team 24/7, which I think is really going to help with the mental illness work
38 that we do here in the community. I am thoroughly delighted that we are going to
39 integrate acupuncture into our substance abuse programs here in the County,
40 specifically, our drug court model. And I am very, very happy that we have been able to
41 increase funding for juvenile behavioral health services. And also the fact we have been
42 able to find money to improve both before and after school programming for children
43 and youths is a remarkable accomplishment. So those things are clearly things that will
44 make a difference in the lives of citizens here in Montgomery County. I also want to



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1 make a very few brief remarks about the MFP Committee of which I have the honor to
2 chair, and I think I speak for my two colleagues when I say that we all share a common
3 purpose to make the most out of every dollar and demonstrate the utmost responsibility
4 for taxpayers' dollars. And we've had very good thorough discussions in MFP, which
5 have led to debates and votes and Council meetings. And I believe that this Council
6 succeeded in turning the budget from a dusty set of numbers to a living, breathing
7 document that establishes our priorities and enables the day-to-day work of good
8 government. So I thank my colleagues, and I look forward to working with all of you over
9 the course of the next few years. We have lots of challenges but I think when we work
10 together, we really can make a difference.

11
12 President Praisner,

13 Thank you. I just want to make a couple more comments of things that will appear in the
14 resolution and a little bit about the Council after today. As you know the hard work with
15 Executive Branch staff and our Council staff begins this afternoon, I guess, to make
16 sure that each of the columns adds up. And so the eye shades will go on and the
17 calculators will come out and the Excel spread sheets will appear to make sure that the
18 puts and takes and zeros and ones all add up. That is a monumental task. And while
19 Councilmembers can relax a little bit because their won't be big packets of reading, our
20 staff including Steve Farber, Joe Beach and OMB and the fifth floor and staff especially
21 will be still hard at work over the next week to make sure that when we come back on
22 Thursday and we do have another meeting on Tuesday, but when we come back on
23 Thursday that we will be ready to take what is the actual anticlimactic final action. Let's
24 hope that it is anticlimactic and there are no surprises. But -- and then my colleagues
25 will take a recess. And I hope that they will use that time to renew relationships with
26 their families, most of whom will find this stranger at the dining room table or the
27 stranger at the restaurant, or even the stranger in bed, as your significant other,
28 because there have been many nights when my colleagues have told me they've fallen
29 asleep on the sofa with a packet of paper in front of them. And I can identify with that.
30 So it's been hard work. The most exciting piece of this process is first of all the work
31 done across the street in that tall building by the County Executive and his staff. I want
32 to spend a moment to thank Isaiah Leggett for the work that was obviously well done in
33 preparing the document that came to us. It was not easy for him. He didn't have the
34 benefit -- he had to finish in a time period that was earlier than we are. The Montgomery
35 County Executive's budget is prepared ahead and publicly presented ahead of any
36 other, I believe, or at least any other County Executive budget, in the state of Maryland,
37 and probably any other of the commissioner forms of government. So he has the
38 earliest information and has to deal with that. I think he did an incredible job in being
39 true to concerns about basic services, concerns about the priorities that the public has
40 identified in his town hall meetings and in his process of gathering information, and also
41 concerned about the fact that this is not a sprint. And we are in for the long haul of four
42 years that will be very challenging, not just for the Executive, but for the Council and the
43 community as a whole. And so starting off is very important. And I think what we have
44 seen in this process is a true partnership between the Executive Branch and the Council



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1 to work through these issues, and a true partnership among Councilmembers. I want to
2 again thank them not only for their due diligence in the work in committees, but also for
3 their approach to these issues that go beyond one budget and one year. There will be, I
4 think, many committee meetings following that much deserved recess that are going to
5 look like budget discussions. We have asked for and will be continuing to look at audit
6 issues over time. We are looking for more useful information on personnel, including
7 personnel in other outside agencies, including an accounting of personnel hired and
8 personnel complements. We'll be looking at budgets over a monthly basis and not just
9 at the end of a period. We're looking at program budgets. I have heard this Council each
10 time we've talked in individual departments about youth and crime prevention issues,
11 that it's kind of frustrating to look at the issue by one agency or one department. So I
12 have already indicated to my colleagues that working with the Board of Education again
13 and the County Executive, I hope to schedule a series of opportunities for us to fully
14 understand from a crosscutting basis where the resources are but more importantly
15 what those resources pay for and where the programs are. So the Collaboration Council
16 needs to be a part of that and the broad public. So I think the message from this
17 Council is that to those who may want to deal in one year or deal in rhetoric or want to
18 focus on percentages that it's more important that this serious Council wants to deal in
19 program and wants to deal in results. And I'm excited by the prospects of working for
20 four years with my colleagues. The budget before us and the motion before is us to
21 approve the Operating Budget for '08, and the other reconciliation items for '07. All in
22 favor? It is unanimous. Thank you all very much. We will move quickly to the consent
23 calendar. Is there a motion?

24
25 Unidentified,
26 (Inaudible).

27
28 President Praisner,
29 Vice President Knap; seconded by Councilmember Floreen. I believe folks want to pull
30 Item number E-1 for conversation. We also, I believe, need to pull E-4 for an update. So
31 let's have those two discussed first. E-4, I believe first if there is someone from the
32 Board of Elections, Margie. You have some new information for us? It is not new to the
33 Councilmembers but it is new public information. You want to introduce yourself and
34 Amanda too if you would like.

35
36 Ms. Mihill,
37 Amanda Mihill, Council Staff.

38
39 Ms. Roher,
40 Margie Roher, Administrative Specialist. First I want to thank on behalf of the Board
41 President and the Election Director, I want to thank the Council for the items that were
42 included on the reconciliation list for the Board of Elections. We received our invoice
43 from the State Board of Elections earlier this week, and much to our surprise it was
44 approximately \$900,000 less than what we had budgeted and what had been told to us



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1 in previous communication. It is for that reason that the supplemental request of
2 \$1,046,640 we are requesting that that amount reduced to \$100,000.

3
4 President Praisner,

5 That information has already been incorporated into the budget actions which the
6 Council took, but I wanted to be sure that we had the accurate information. So when the
7 Board of Elections cost overrun dollar amount is recorded as far as an action, it would
8 be \$100,000. I personally want to thank the Board of Elections. This has not been an
9 easy year for the Board. But with the changes in technology, with the inadequate space
10 that you work under, and with the issue of having to deal with an election that is no
11 longer locally controlled but it is a state-election process, knowing when the bills come
12 and what the dollar will be, let alone knowing what the materials are for the election
13 process is quite a challenge. And as we know as Councilmember Trachtenberg is Chair
14 of the Management and Fiscal Policy indicated, with the likelihood of an earlier primary,
15 the likelihood of a need for additional resources is -- in the Board of Elections and we're
16 coming up with a presidential election as well, so that means more folks who are voting,
17 more need for recruiters, and more need potentially for resources to have a smooth
18 election where everyone can vote and everyone's vote is fairly recorded. So that is that
19 item for Councilmembers. Thank you very much, Margie.

20
21 Ms. Roher,
22 Thank you.

23
24 President Praisner,
25 And take back to Margaret Jergensen and the Board our appreciation.

26
27 Ms. Roher,
28 I certainly will. Thank you.

29
30 President Praisner,
31 Okay, Item number 1 is the Arts and Humanities Council Non-Departmental Account
32 \$100,000 for Waters House Barn Adaptive Restoration. I know we have folks from --
33 yes, is the -- right but the Conference of Visitor's Bureau is not here? Kelly could not
34 come?

35
36 Unidentified,
37 (Inaudible).

38
39 President Praisner,
40 Peggy, do you want to join us as well. Minna, could you introduce yourself and then,
41 Peggy, and down the line. And then I'm going to turn it over to -- Mr. Leventhal is Chair
42 of the Health and Human Services Committee, or is this Mr. Berliner is Chair of the Arts
43 (inaudible) comes under arts. Is it yours, Roger?



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1 Councilmember Berliner,
2 I believe I have the privilege.

3
4 President Praisner,
5 Right, okay. Lucky you. Okay, Minna.

6
7 Ms. Davidson,
8 Minna Davidson, Council Staff.

9
10 Ms. Erickson,
11 Peggy Erickson, Heritage Tourism Alliance.

12
13 Ms. Cameron,
14 Teresa Cameron, CEO Arts and Humanities Council Montgomery County.

15
16 Ms. Harper,
17 Mary Kay Harper, Montgomery County Historical Society.

18
19 President Praisner,
20 Okay, Mr. Berliner.

21
22 Councilmember Berliner,
23 To refresh my colleagues' memory with respect to this burning issue -- like burning
24 barns and I don't know. Where we left this item was that we had conditionally
25 appropriated \$100,000 for a study to determine what we should do with this very unique
26 barn that we have in Germantown, off of 270, that the Heritage Society would like to be
27 able use with respect to pulling together all the various places that it has exhibits into a
28 wonderful exhibit hall, if you will, as well as the visitor's center seeing this as a great
29 opportunity to highlight Montgomery County at a place where many people are entering
30 the county again right off 270 that sits right next to a school that is going to be doing
31 geothermal energy and that is moving forward with that in a manner that they would like
32 to know whether or not this particular barn could in fact also take advantage of that
33 opportunity. And so we were pressed to move forward in order to meet that timeline. But
34 we were concerned as to the open-ended nature of the County's obligation here,
35 potentially, and wanted to get some clarification from the state as to whether or not the
36 property itself could be used as part of the County's match that we would get funds from
37 the state with respect to and we wanted to know could the property be part of our
38 contribution. So we made it conditional upon getting assurances, if you will, from the
39 state that we could in fact use it. Well we got a response from the state that I think falls
40 somewhat short of assurances, in fact, was a -- fair to say a rejection of the notion that
41 we could use it as a match. And therefore it is incumbent upon us to take that condition
42 off and then to determine what do we want to do. We've got this facility that the County
43 owns, that people feel has great potential, and quite frankly, we're not in a position to
44 judge what that what that potential could be in the absence of going forward with some



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1 sort of limited feasibility. There was a belief that the 100,000 could be a little more than
2 is necessary to achieve that, so could we come up with an alternative number that could
3 give us a sense as to what the opportunities are with respect to this unique piece of
4 property, and that's where the conversation sits in this moment.

5
6 President Praisner,
7 Thank you. Councilmember Leventhal.

8
9 Councilmember Leventhal,
10 It has been relayed to me that a feasibility study might be accomplished for less than
11 \$100,000 and the number of \$60,000 has been suggested. I could vote for that this
12 morning, but I would like an understanding of what we would buy with \$60,000.

13
14 President Praisner,
15 Can someone there answer the question?

16
17 Unidentified,
18 (Inaudible).

19
20 Peggy Erickson
21 Well it would be a scaled-down study of what we originally proposed. It would be a
22 business plan that would work on the revenue that would be needed to keep the facility
23 going, and it would be a concept design, and the two have to go hand-in-hand to figure
24 out what your air-conditioning space needs, what would generate in rent. And Mary Kay
25 is looking for tenants to off-set that. So it would be a smaller version of the original
26 business plan and concept design.

27
28 Councilmember Leventhal,
29 And would it provide the school system with the information it needs to proceed with a
30 new school?

31
32 Peggy Erickson
33 Absolutely. And you know it's fabulous. We were lobbying out there. We had a nice
34 conversation with Dick. You know, he needs the numbers by August. They would write
35 the contracts spring of 2000 -- .

36
37 President Praisner,
38 Not Dick.

39
40 Unidentified,
41 Somebody (inaudible).

42
43 Peggy Erickson



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1 Someone. Someone, that's right. The school system's schedule is they would bid the
2 contract for the wells, spring of 2008. By then we'll know whether we get the bond bill in
3 Annapolis, which is something other -- separate and above the transportation
4 enhancement fund money. So we would have money to go forward with the
5 commitment to the wells. We reserved the wells for the renovation. So we're -- it all fit
6 it's together, it's just a little smaller.

7
8 Councilmember Leventhal,
9 Well, I'm willing to vote for \$60,000 today. I do hope that if we are in fact studying the
10 feasibility that we have our minds open all of us here and those who are working on this
11 that a feasibility study may find that it isn't feasible.

12
13 President Praisner,
14 Absolutely.

15
16 Councilmember Leventhal,
17 So I would vote without prejudice as they say to go ahead and study this concept, but I
18 can't pledge ongoing support, depending what we learn; and also I think depending on
19 the amount of support that we think we might get from the state.

20
21 President Praisner,
22 The other issue of course is that it is a Park and Planning facility, and the question --
23 unfortunately we don't Park and Planning here at this point. And the answers from Park
24 and Planning in the packet are not necessarily satisfactory either, but the question -- as
25 I mentioned to Councilmember Andrews before, from a PHED Committee perspective,
26 I'm anxious to know all the buildings -- historic or otherwise -- that Park and Planning
27 owns that have some expectation of maintenance. And that's been an issue. And also
28 some expectation of what the long-term plans are. We've had some issues raised about
29 park houses that we need to talk about later on the PHED Committee; it's already on
30 our schedule. And I want to pull these other things into it. And it would be helpful to
31 have the feasibility study to fit in with Park and Planning coming back and telling me --
32 us the Council that the PHED Committee as well first what there plans are for these
33 facilities and stabilizing or whatever; what the costs might be on these issues.

34
35 Mary Kary Harper
36 And one other things I'd like to say about the need for the feasibility is that this barn is
37 very close to this school, as well as these out -- appendages that are practically falling
38 down. And no matter if the feasibility study says well no visitor's center, no this/that; you
39 to do something with the buildings because they're not safe for the school.

40
41 President Praisner,
42 Councilmember Elrich.

43
44 Councilmember Elrich,



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1 I want to dovetail about Ms. Praisner's remarks. We had presentations in the PHED
2 Committee from Park and Planning that would indicate that we're doing something less
3 than a stellar job of maintaining the existing historical infrastructure in the County. So I
4 am will to go as far as a study, but my definition of feasible, is if you can pay for the
5 renovation, maintenance, and ongoing operations with OPM -- other people's money,
6 then I -- then it's feasible. But if this project is going to compete with already existing
7 historic resources that we can't maintain then this project, in my mind, is not feasible. I
8 do not want to add a burden onto Park and Planning that requires significant investment
9 and ongoing commitment year after year when we can't do the stuff that we're supposed
10 to be doing now. So this is like at the very, very bottom of my priority list. I'll do a
11 feasibility study, but that is probably the last money I want to spend on this.

12
13 President Praisner,

14 I just want to be clear, Marc. It is a Park and Planning building, so already we would
15 have an issue as far as Park and Planning of fixing it in some way. I think that's -- but
16 stabilizing is a little different than constructing and running programs within it, et cetera.
17 Councilmember Floreen.

18
19 Councilmember Floreen,

20 Well, I'm with Marc. I appreciate the interest in its effort, but I think it's important to be
21 clear about what's being proposed. What is being proposed is a visitor center to attract
22 traffic off of 270 into this facility as a visitor. This is a barn that's located in the middle of
23 a residential neighborhood next to a school. As Park and Planning has pointed out in
24 their letter to Mrs. Praisner a couple weeks ago, they've got some issues about this.
25 And I can imagine. I mean, we don't need to even spend a whole lot of time talking
26 about what those issues might be. So what I have heard is that this is the last time that
27 anyone is going to come to the well, which would be us, on this particular proposal. That
28 funding for anything else associated with this proposed visitor center within the Water's
29 House Barn, which is what this is about. It's not restoration so much as it is about
30 getting money -- state/federal money to fund a transportation-related visitor's center.
31 Anything else is going to come from -- as -- OPM, other people's money. Well
32 technically this state's money would be in the -- it would be in our (inaudible). But either
33 other public sector money or private sector money to move this forward, is that what you
34 told me, Ms. Erickson?

35
36 Ms. Erickson,

37 Mary Kay is the leaseholder (inaudible), you know, I -- really it's the Conference and
38 Visitor's Bureau Well, and, I mean, we facilitated everyone coming together. That is our
39 hope and our wish that we would fund this independently of county government. As
40 someone said, you know, we may look at the feasibility study and decide that we can't
41 afford to do this. So, I mean, at this point we have no plans. We're looking for all other
42 sources of money from project open space to bond bills to grants.

43
44 Councilmember Floreen,



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1 Have you mentioned this to the community yet?

2
3 Ms. Erickson,

4 Yes, we met with the community. We met with -- we were part of -- .

5
6 Councilmember Floreen,

7 You told them this is for a visitor's center -- 270?

8
9 Ms. Erickson,

10 Absolutely. They -- it is going to be more than a visitor's center though; it's going to be a
11 museum. And they were excited about the history component.

12
13 Councilmember Floreen,

14 But you hope it will be (inaudible).

15
16 Ms. Erickson,

17 That's right absolutely. But we were part of the outreach to the community with the
18 school system, and have I to tell you the first night I stood up and told them what the
19 plan was for this, I held my breath. And they were very enthusiastic. They feel very
20 territorial about the Water's House and barn. They love it. They instantly said maybe we
21 can run school programs from the barn.

22
23 Councilmember Floreen,

24 Well that part is -- sure, that is the easy part, but what this money from the federal
25 government or whoever is managing this source of dollars that's coming from is for a
26 visitor's center that has a -- as we were told earlier, it will replace the one that is in the
27 Up-County Services Center, and it is designed to be a welcome to Montgomery County
28 kind of place. Not just a really neat barn.

29
30 Peggy Erickson,

31 Well, I think -- .

32
33 President Praisner,

34 I think, Ms. Floreen, what I'm hearing is your reservations about what they are planning.
35 But we're not approving -- .

36
37 Councilmember Floreen,

38 My reservations are significant.

39
40 President Praisner,

41 Right. But we're not approving what they're planning, we're just having them to look at it.

42
43 Councilmember Floreen,



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1 Well what I'm saying is I'm not in the game yet, and I don't want to go down this road a
2 whole lot further without having a significant buy-in for all the explicit purposes here.
3 And, as I said, other people's money funding the next steps. That is where I am. And
4 restoring a barn is something else. And obviously we need to preserve our historic
5 structures. But this effort is a much bigger one at least in the eye of the beholder, as far
6 as I can see. And I think that the engagement of all the players needs to be fully sought
7 out and worked with as you proceed.

8
9 President Praisner,
10 Councilmember Andrews, last comments and then I'm going back to Councilmember
11 Berliner.

12
13 Councilmember Andrews,
14 Yep, last comment. Thank you. Well, I think it is very important for us to get a list of the
15 properties owned by Park and Planning that are in need of more maintenance. I recall
16 the last time I saw the figure for the maintenance of historic properties in Park and
17 Planning is in the 180,000 range. Maybe it has gone up a little bit but it's miniscule. And
18 I have a strong preference for maintaining what we have first before we add anything
19 new. In terms of feasibility, there is a big difference between feasibility and preferability.
20 And I would hope that the feasibility will show that this could be funded by other
21 sources.

22
23 President Praisner,
24 Councilmember Berliner.

25
26 Councilmember Berliner,
27 I believe the panel has heard the deep skepticism with respect to this. It is my hope that
28 your feasibility study pared back to \$60,000, which would be my motion, will address
29 these concerns and put before us something that this Council might be in a position to
30 embrace.

31
32 President Praisner,
33 Moved and seconded that that piece be \$60,000 instead of \$100,000. Let's an
34 amendment to that item. All in favor? Unanimous, thank you. We're back now to the
35 consent calendar.

36
37 Peggy Erickson,
38 Thank you very much.

39
40 President Praisner,
41 Pardon me?

42
43 Minna Davidson,



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1 One brief clarification. In the approval resolution, the language describing the Council
2 action says that the funds are to be used --to begin the adaptive restoration of the
3 historic (inaudible).

4
5 President Praisner,
6 The funds you modify that?

7
8 Minna Davidson,
9 (Inaudible). Thank you.

10
11 Councilmember Leventhal,
12 In the modification we need to be very explicit that information must be provided to
13 enable the school system to proceed with its school.

14
15 President Praisner,
16 As part of the study. Councilmember Floreen.

17
18 Councilmember Floreen,
19 Thank you, Madam President, with respect to a couple of other items on the consent
20 calendar. First I wanted to just point out item 3-C, which is our action on the Housing
21 Initiative Fund. This was our committee recommendation that we put in some months
22 ago. Basically, bookkeeping direction with respect to how we will preserve the -- what
23 we hope will be continued increase in the Housing Initiative Fund, but at least that set
24 parameters for further -- further years. And as dollars come in from other sources how
25 those dollars will be added to the Housing Initiative Fund. So I just wanted to make that
26 point. I'm glad to have this here. We really didn't need it for this particular budget year,
27 but you never know. So I'm glad that is in. And the other one was Item number H, which
28 is the Silver Spring Metro Station South Entrance. I just wanted to point out that in this
29 case we have determined that there is money basically sitting down at Park and
30 Planning that we think should be used to pay for this. And we have asked that Park and
31 Planning release those dollars so that County General Obligation bonds will not be
32 needed to fund it. However, given their process, it has taken a bit of time. We think they
33 will take this up in June, Glenn? Well soon. And we've asked them to do that again,
34 haven't we, Mr. Orlin?

35
36 President Praisner,
37 Okay.

38
39 Dr. Orlin,
40 Yes, we have asked them. There has been correspondence between DPWT and the
41 Planning Board Chairman about that. What the Chairman says is it is a regulatory
42 process (inaudible).

43
44 Councilmember Floreen,



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1 Right I know. So I would just ask on this and perhaps we will -- if we need a letter from
2 the Council on this to confirm these -- this action today, I think that would be helpful.

3
4 Dr. Orlin,
5 Okay.

6
7 Councilmember Floreen,
8 Okay. Thanks.

9
10 President Praisner,
11 Any other items on the consent calendar that anyone wants to comment on? I would like
12 to just ask folks -- Mr. Levchenko and Mr. Hawes to come forward. Just one brief
13 question. Our action doesn't do anything to jeopardize any relationship as far as state
14 funding for any of these projects as far as the state's concerned under school
15 construction, does it?

16
17 Keith Levchenko,
18 That's correct.

19
20 President Praisner,
21 Okay. Well, I think I knew that answer already, but I wanted to -- you're excused, Mr.
22 Levchenko, but you are not, Mr. Hawes. And you are not allowed to move anywhere
23 either. You never asked the Council's permission.

24
25 Mr. Hawes,
26 I knew what the answer was going to be, Mrs. Praisner, but now I'm asking for
27 forgiveness.

28
29 President Praisner,
30 Before we vote, I wanted to add a comment to Dick. He and I have known each other
31 for a long, long, long time. But I know Councilmembers -- all Councilmembers, past and
32 present, who have had an opportunity to work with you on school capital issues, Dick,
33 have appreciated your candor with us, have appreciated your can-do attitude, have
34 appreciated your alerts when things have potentially raised problems, and have, I think,
35 you have also appreciated when we've alerted you about issues that we pick up within
36 the community. It is a challenging task that you've had. You have had a lot of -- a hand
37 in the deliberations of the buildings that we have built and the capital approach for the
38 school system. And I want to on behalf of the County Council wish you the best of luck.
39 We are going to definitely miss you. We know you'll be here until June 12 or 15, I
40 believe. But that may or may not have an opportunity for us to have you in front of us.
41 And I wanted to on behalf of the Council thank you for your service to the children and
42 the communities of this County. Anything you would like to say?

43
44 Mr. Hawes,



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1 Well, I don't think these things (inaudible) make it brief. Mrs. Praisner, I've appreciated
2 our relationship. I know we haven't always agreed on everything, but we have always
3 managed to reach a good place in terms of collaboration and cooperation. And I have
4 appreciated the opportunity to work in Montgomery County. It is a great place to work, a
5 great place to live, and I have been telling everybody -- this is really kind of -- really brief
6 but a story. The position I'm taking with another firm, which is a large international firm,
7 and they do a lot of government contracting. And because I'm going to head up the
8 West Coast operations, I had to vented through a couple of congressional offices. And
9 one of the Senators from Hawaii said, "Well, Montgomery County is such a demanding
10 county and looks for excellence in everything they do -- "this is a Senator from Hawaii.

11
12 President Praisner,
13 Senator Anoya. I met with him a month ago.

14
15 Mr. Hawes,
16 He said they demand excellence in everything they do, and if that guy has lasted for 20
17 years there, he can last for 5 years over here. So I think that -- .

18
19 President Praisner,
20 I believe the Senator lives in Montgomery County on his -- .

21
22 Mr. Hawes,
23 I think that says a lot for the County and the reputation that you all have for excellence
24 throughout the country and throughout the world. Thank you.

25
26 President Praisner,
27 Well, we don't gain that reputation by Councilmembers picking up bricks and mortar; we
28 gained that reputation because of the staff of county government and other facilities and
29 agencies such as your leadership, so thank you very much, Dick. Councilmember
30 Floreen.

31
32 Councilmember Floreen,
33 Mr. Hawes, we -- all the Councilmembers will be looking forward to receiving your
34 address in Hawaii so that we can keep an eye on you.

35
36 Mr. Hawes,
37 You will have that information.

38
39 Unidentified,
40 We're going to stay.

41
42 President Praisner,
43 Okay the consent calendar is before us. All in favor? With the modifications as made?
44 That's unanimous. I believe we accepted the \$60,000 and the change of the Board of



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1 Elections. District Council, we have three resolutions. Since two have the same date,
2 I'm going to combine 4 and 5 for resolution to approve comprehensive revisions to the
3 Office of Zoning and Administrative Hearing Fees Schedule. The public hearing in
4 action is scheduled for June 19, at 1:30 p.m. And a resolution to approve revisions to
5 the Board of Appeals Special Exception Filing Fees. The public hearing and action is
6 also scheduled for June 19, at 1:30 p.m. Is there a motion?

7
8 Vice President Knapp,
9 So moved.

10
11 President Praisner,
12 Vice President Knapp; seconded by Councilmember Trachtenberg. All in favor? That is
13 unanimous. The second action is an introduction of a Resolution to Approve Use of
14 Advanced Land Acquisition Fund, ALARF for Acquisition of Real Property, George and
15 Shirley B. Young Property for the Oakmont Avenue Right-of-Way; action is tentatively
16 scheduled for May 24, and there is not time listed, but that's because that's our May 24
17 action and the schedule fluctuates as far as time is concerned. Is there a motion?

18
19 Vice President Knapp,
20 So moved.

21
22 President Praisner,
23 Vice President Knapp; is there a second? Councilmember Floreen. All in favor? It is
24 unanimous. Thank you all. We will be back here at 12:30 for a press conference. Thank
25 you.